

Document G: Roberta “Bobbi” McIntyre

Background: Bobbi McIntyre knew she wanted to join the military since she a young girl. Her family had a history of serving in the Armed Forces. Her grandmother had served in the Women’s Auxiliary Corps (WAC) during World War II and her father had served in the Army Air Corps. In the mid 1970s, McIntyre enrolled at Guilford College in North Carolina. After graduating in 1977, McIntyre went to see an Air Force recruiter. She described that Air Force recruiter as “unenthusiastic” about enlisting her. Not deterred by her experience, she decided to visit a Navy recruitment center.

Naval Service: Two weeks after walking into the Navy recruitment center, McIntyre was in Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Newport, Rhode Island. Her dedication and drive paid off and were noticed by her superiors. McIntyre continued on to Surface Warfare Officer School (SWOS), one of the first women selected to do so. In 1978 the case of *Owens v. Brown* challenging the Navy’s decision to NOT assign women to shipboard service was ongoing. Although the case was yet to be decided, the Navy expected shifting policies and began to implement some changes. Because of these changes, McIntyre was one of the first women permitted to attend Surface Warfare Officer School. Upon completion, she received orders to USS *Dixon*, homeported in San Diego.

The fall of 1978 represented a dramatic departure from the past. Changes to legislation officially opened new career opportunities to women. McIntyre was now legally allowed to report for shipboard duty, female aviators would be able to operate when their squadrons deployed, and all women in the Navy now had the opportunity to fill seagoing jobs. As one of two women officers who were assigned to USS *Dixon*, McIntyre became responsible for overseeing ship conversion to bring additional enlisted women aboard. In an interview in 2015, McIntyre recalled that creating a female housing compartment caused some frustration among male sailors: “They had a separate berthing compartment...that caused a lot of consternation [or resentment] because the people that were living there, it was a pretty prime [location and they] had to move.... they did not like that.” After enlisted women reported to the ship, McIntyre was responsible for relaying their issues and concerns to higher ups. McIntyre was one of the first women able to benefit from changing patterns in American society during America’s Civil Rights Era.

